

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00128 01 OF 02 211606Z

43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

/060 W

----- 110483

R 211527Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1185

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUSAKA 0128

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, ZA

SUBJECT: CABINET SHUFFLE

1. LATE JAN 20, ON EVE OF PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S DEPARTURE FOR STATE VISITS TO SOUTH ASIA (SEPTTEL), RESHUFFLE OF CABINET WAS ANNOUNCED. DROPPED FROM CABINET AND FROM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SEAT TO WHICH HE WAS APPOINTED BY PRESIDENT IS MINISTER OF MINES AND INDUSTRY ANDREW KASHITA. REPLACING KASHITA IS AXON SOKO, MINISTER OF POWER, TRANSPORT, AND WORKS WHO IN TURN IS REPLACED BY SEFELINO MULENGA. MOVING INTO KASHITA'S PARLIAMENTARY SEAT AND MULENGA'S JOB AT MINISTRY OF LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCES AND TOURISM IS JAMES MAPOMA, ZAMBIAN AMBASSADOR TO ITALY.

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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 00128 01 OF 02 211606Z

2. REMOVAL OF KASHITA WAS NOT UNEXPECTED. HE

WAS A TECHNOCRAT AND MANAGER PAR EXCELLENCE, BUT HARDLY A POLITICIAN. GOVERNMENT INSIDERS HAVE LONG PREDICTED THAT HIS ARROGANCE, INDEPENDENCE, AND PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO INDUSTRIALIZATION AND TO NEGOTIATION OF TAKEOVER BY GRZ OF COPPER MARKETING AND MINE MANAGEMENT CONTRACTS HELD BY ANGLO-AMERICAN AND BY AMAX WOULD BRING HIM INTO CONFLICT WITH SENIOR POLITICAL LEADERS IN PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE, ESPECIALLY KASHITA'S PREDECESSOR AT MINES AND INDUSTRY HUMPHREY MULEMBA, A POLITICAL FORCE OF CONSIDERABLE CONSEQUENCE. KASHITA'S INSISTENCE THAT PARASTATAL ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING AT A LOSS SHOULD BE MADE MORE PROFITABLE BY RAISING PRICES ON SUBSIDIZED COMMODITIES COULD HAVE TRIGGERED HIS DISMISSAL. ALSO, KASHITA IS CREDITED WITH HAVING SENT UP TO PRIME MINISTER CHONA LAST NOVEMBER ALL PAPERS RELEVANT TO 100 PERCENT RISE IN PRICES OF BREAD, SOAP, AND COOKING OIL WHICH RESULTED IN NEAR RIOTS AND HURRIED REVERSAL OF PRICE HIKES BY EMBARRASSED GOVERNMENT ONE WEEK LATER. CHONA TOOK FULL PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS ACTION, WHICH WAS OBVIOUSLY DISPLEASING TO PRESIDENT WHO WAS ABROAD AT TIME. KASHITA'S OPPOSITION TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S PET STEEL MILL PROJECT, WHICH HE CONSIDERS UNECONOMIC, BROUGHT HIM INTO CONFLICT WITH MULEMBA WHO STRONGLY FAVORS THE PROJECT. HE ALSO TREAD ON OTHERS' TOES BY OPPOSING NEW CEMENT PLANT PROJECT. AND HIS ADVOCACY OF A GO-SLOW ZAMBIANIZATION POLICY UNTIL WELL-TRAINED, CONFIDENT ZAMBIANS AVAILABLE WAS BOLD AND POLITICALLY UNPOPULAR. THAT COPPER INDUSTRY PLAGUED BY STEEP DROP IN PRICE AND SHIPMENT DELAYS DUE TO PORT CONGESTION, THOUGH IN NO WAY ATTRIBUTABLE TO KASHITA, NOT HELPFUL TO HIS CAUSE.

3. IN LINE WITH USUAL PRACTICE HERE, KASHITA WAS GIVEN WRITTEN NOTICE IN LETTER FROM PRESIDENT DELIVERED AT NOON, JANUARY 21. (MAPOMA TOLD AMBASSADOR THIS MORNING HE LEARNED OF HIS OWN ELEVATION
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PAGE 03 LUSAKA 00128 01 OF 02 211606Z

TO CABINET ONLY DAY BEFORE IN MESSAGE TO ROME.) IN MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR ON JAN 10 KASHITA DID NOT GIVE IMPRESSION OF MAN WHO KNEW HE WAS ON SKIDS. HOWEVER, SHORTLY AFTER WHEN 10 MAN ZAMBIAN DELEGATION HEADED BY HUMPHREY MULEMBA VISITED LONDON TO LOOK FOR NEW OFFICES FOR ZIMCO, KASHITA AS MINISTER WAS OUTRANKED BY THIS REPRESENTATIVE OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE. MULEMBA DID ALL THE TALKING. BASICALLY,

KASHITA WAS SILENT THROUGHOUT.

4. AXON SOKO, KASHITA'S SUCCESSOR, IS UN-
IMPRESSIVE AND HAS SHOWN LITTLE SKILL IN
HANDLING COMPLEX TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS
ARISING FROM 1973 RHODESIAN BORDER CLOSURE.
HE WILL BE MORE CAUTIOUS AND LESS PRAGMATIC
IN HIS APPROACH TO PROBLEMS THAN KASHITA
AND PERHAPS MORE PLIABLE TO POLICIES AND
WISHES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

5. AT POWER, TRANSPORT AND WORKS, MULENGA
MOVES BACK INTO A MINISTRY IN WHICH
HE HAD CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE AS MINISTER OF
STATE PRIOR TO DEC 1973. WE HAVE NOT BEEN
VERY IMPRESSED WITH HIM BUT SOME ZAMBIANS REGARD
HIM AS RELATIVELY WELL ORGANIZED AND THOUGHTFUL.

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00128 02 OF 02 211637Z

43

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LUSAKA 0128

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

6. CABINET NEWCOMER JAMES C. MAPOMA HAS FEEZE
AMBASSADOR IN ROME SINCE MID-1974. EARLIER,
MAPOMA HELD POSTS AS PERMANENT SECRETARY

IN SEVERAL ECONOMIC MINISTRIYS. IN THOSE
POSITIONS, HE IMPRESSED US AS STEADY BUT
UNDYNAMIC, AND NON-INNOVATIVE, NEITHER VERY
COMMUNICATIVE NOR VERY HELPFUL TO AMERICANS.
BIO DATA CONTAINED IN LUSAKA'S 1208 OF JUNE
13,197 .EMBASSY ROME MAY WISH COMMENT FURTHER
ON MAPOMA.

7. CHANGES IN ZAMBIAN POLICE FORCE, PLAGUED WITH
RUMORS OF SCANDAL AMC REKENTLY ACCUSED BY STATE
AUDITORS OF LAX ACCOUNTING FOR GOVERNMENT FUNDS,
WERE ALSO ANNOUNCED. COPPERBELT POLICE CHIEF
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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 00128 02 OF 02 211637Z

ELIAS KATAMBI BECOMES COMMISSIONER, SECOND-RANKING
OFFICER OF FORCE AFTER INSPECTOR GENERAL CHELA.
KATAMBI REPLACES LATE ANDERSON MUYOLE WHOSE SUICIDE

LAST DECEMBER HAS NEVER BEEN OFFICIALLY EXPLAINED.
IT IS RELIABLY REPORTED, HOABVER, THAT MUSOLE WAS
ON VERGE OF BEING ARRESTED FOR CORRUPTION AND
PERHAPS FOR COUP PLOTTING WHEN HE DIED. PRESIDENT
KAUNDA STRONGLY CRITICIZED CORRUPTION AND INEFFICIENCY
IN POLICE LAST FALL. KATAMBI, WHO HAS HAD RESPONSIB-
ILITY FOR MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER AND SECURITY IN
ZAMBIA'S MOST POLITICALLY VOLATILE AND
CRIME-RIDDEN PROVINCE, OWES APPOINTMENT TO SENORITY.
HE IS NO DOUBT EXPECTED TO WIELD NEW BROOM TO SWEEP
POLICE FORCE CLEAN (OR AT LEAST TO PUSH DIRT WELL
UNDER CARPET AND OUT OF SIGHT).

8. COMMENT: NEW CABINET LINE-UP DEFINITELY LESS
IMPRESSIVE WITHOUT THE ENERGETIC AND BRILLIANT
KASHITA. SHIFT FROM KASHITA TO SOKO COULD
AFFECT PROGRESS KASHITA HAD BEEN MAKING TOWARD
SETTLEMENT WITH AMAX. WHILE SOKO MAY BE LESS
FORMIDABLE A NEGOTIATOR THAN KASHITA, CHANGE-
OVER MIGHT ALSO BE USED BY GRZ TO REOPEN ISSUES,
THOUGH WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THIS WILL BE
THE CASE. ALSO, KASHITA HAD BEEN WORKING ON LONG-
PROMISED DRAFT INVESTMENT CODE WHICH HE HAD HOPED
TO LAUNCH IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY EARLY FEBRUARY.
WE DO NOT KNOW SOKO'S VIEWS ON CODE BUT SUSPECT
THAT IT MAY BE CASUALTY OF CHANGE-OVER. (THIS
TOO IS A KASHITA PROJECT OPPOSED BY SOME OTHER

LEADERS, AMONG THEM MINISTER OF PLANNING AND
FINANCE)
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